Amendments to the Specification:

Please add the following new paragraphs after paragraph [0014] on page 2:

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Figure 1 shows a model of the main events occurring during the progressive expression of the enzyme, heme oxygenase-1 (HO-1), in the most advanced phases of the acute inflammatory reaction. Specifically, Figure 1 shows a model of induced pleurisy after injection of carrageen in the rat, where "HO-1" represents the levels of heme oxygenase-1, "iNOS" the inducible nitric-oxide synthetase, and "PGE_2" prostaglandin E_2.

Figure 2 shows the results of a Western Blot, which analyses the expression of HSP32 (HO-1) and HSP70 after thermal shock in the model of rat femoral head cartilage.

Figure 3 illustrates that the cellular destruction caused by erythrocytes is dose dependent, as evidenced by the diminution of the cellular incorporation of radioactive sulphate, in rat femoral head cartilage.

Figure 4 illustrates that the cellular destruction caused by haemoglobin is dose dependent, as evidenced by the diminution of the cellular incorporation of radioactive sulphate, in rat femoral head cartilage.

Figure 5 shows that HSPs, which have previously been induced by stress, prevent cellular destruction, as demonstrated by an increase of the incorporation of radioactive sulphate by the cells in rat femoral head cartilage under thermal stress and then treated with haemoglobin.

Figure 6 shows stress-induced HSPs able to prevent cellular destruction by erythrocytes.

Figure 7a shows a Western blot of rat femoral head cartilage, illustrating that diacerein, when compared to the control and the reference solution, triggers a dose-dependent increase of the expression of HO-1. Figures 7b and 7c show Western blots of mice macrophages cultivated with and without diacerein (FIG. 7b) or rhein (FIG. 7c), later

analysed at 15, 30 and 60 minutes (FIG. 7b) and at 0, 15, 30, 60, 120 minutes as well as 18 hours (FIG. 7c).

Figure 8 shows that treatment with diacerein prevents the cellular destruction caused by the erythrocyte lysate, in human chondrocytes.

Figure 9 shows that treatment with rhein prevents the cellular destruction caused by the erythrocyte lysate, in human chondrocytes.

Figure 10 shows that the treatment with diacerein causes a dose-dependent reduction of the tissular reaction.

Figure 11 shows that the tissular reaction triggered by the implantation of rat tissue to the mouse is reduced in a dose-dependent manner by treatment with diacerein (on the left on FIG. 11 is number of inflammatory cells; on the right is the volume of the exudate).

Figure 12 shows that treatment with diacerein preserves the integrity of the grafted tissue according to the dose of diacerein administered, as evidenced by the conservation of the content in collagen (on the left on FIG. 12) and in glycosamino-glycan (on the right) of the grafted tissue.

Figure 13 shows the comparison of the effects of treatment with a COX-2 inhibitor (rofecoxib) and diacerein, on the reduction of the tissular reaction (formation of a reactive granuloma) caused by the implantation of rat tissue in the mouse.

Figure 14 shows the comparison of the effects of a treatment with rofecoxib and diacerein, on the reduction of the tissular reaction caused by the implantation of rat tissue in the mouse. The graph on the left illustrates the cellular infiltration, and the one on the right the volume of the exudates.

Figure 15 shows the comparison of the differences between the effect of treatment with rofecoxib and diacerein, on the preservation of the integrity of the grafted tissue. The graph on the left corresponds to the content in collagen, the one on the right to the content in glycosaminoglycan of the tissue.